

AMIAA News

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The Rev. Jirair Sogomian
Editor



Students at CAHL (Bourdj Hammoud, Lebanon) celebrating the "AMAA Month" in their particular way (See Story on page 11)

Refocusing our Vision

Jirair M. Sogomian

Passages of time and life transitions may at times be painful and traumatic experiences, but they also challenge us to renew and redefine our vision, to refocus on the essential in our task and to take a fresh look at our priorities. I believe every worthwhile organization needs to do this from time to time to remain viable, relevant and effective.

In this transitional time, as we rethink of AMAA's mission and try to refocus its vision and redefine its priorities, we soon realize that the mission of the AMAA is the mission of the church. After all, the AMAA is the Armenian Evangelical Church's extended loving and healing arm to the world which God loved to the cross, and as such, its mission is set forth in no uncertain terms by our Lord himself, the Head of the Church. Jesus did so at the beginning of his own ministry by borrowing the words of the prophet Isaiah. Offering those words with fresh imagination within a new context he defined his mission – and therefore the mission of the church, with these words: ***The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news to the poor in spirit, to proclaim release to those who are captive to sin and blind to the truth, to free those who are oppressed by human injustice and sin, and to let the world know that God's favor is at hand.***

In doing so, we find Jesus – in spite of his immediate rejection in Nazareth and his ultimate rejection at the cross – injecting hope for the future. We know now as Jesus knew then, that as we offer to starving human spirits the ***Bread of Heaven*** which alone satisfies, and as we offer to thirsty souls the ***Living Water*** which alone can quench human thirst, we become instruments of liberation to all those who are captive to sin and blind to the truth. As we proclaim the good news, those who oppress others through their injustice and sin repent of their ways and cease from oppression, and the world becomes aware that God's reign of justice and love is at hand.

From the supreme example of our Master and Lord, we must always be conscious of the priorities in our mission of love and mercy. Though we reach out to all in response to their human need, as our Master did, we do so always remembering as he did, that ***we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*** And whenever and wherever people choose to benefit only

from material and physical ministrations at the expense of their spiritual needs, we must remember our Lord's words in Luke 4:43, ***I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to others also; for I was sent for this purpose.***

The word of God which was central in the life of Jesus; the word which was there in the creation of all that was good; the word which came through patriarchs and prophets; the Word which ultimately was made flesh in Jesus Christ and dwelt in our midst; the word which was proclaimed by St. Gregory illuminating the land of Armenia with the truth of God, is ultimately responsible for who we are as Christians and followers of the Christ. It is that word which has engendered faith in us and which has ultimately claimed us as children of God and followers of the Christ, and it is empowered by that word that we reach out to the world in compassionate service.

The future of our mission field – whether it is Armenia, the Middle East or any other part of the world – is uncertain and will always be uncertain. Yet, history shows that some of the greatest mission dreams were conceived in burning hearts and realized in the most desperate and uncertain moments wherever people lived in despair. It is in such times that we learn to trust God's word of hope, and placing our hand into the hand of God dare to step into the darkness of tomorrow, knowing that God who owns the future will be there with us!

So what is our mission all about? Called and empowered by the Holy Spirit, our mission is to bring the good news of God's love to the impoverished in spirit. It is to proclaim release to those who are captive to sin and blind to the truth. It is to free those who are oppressed by human injustice and sin, and to let the world know that God's grace is here to sustain us. Let us do so together with all the love and faith we can muster, and let us do so hopefully and courageously. □

Haigazian University Board of Trustees Meet in Beirut

The Board of Trustees of Haigazian University, composed of members from the US, and members from Beirut, Lebanon, held its spring meeting on the campus of the university on Friday and Saturday, April 27-28, 2001. This historical meeting was held on the 45th anniversary of the founding of Haigazian College by the Armenian Missionary Association of America. It marked a meaningful milestone in the sometimes turbulent yet most influential life of this unique Armenian institution of learning on the life and destiny of literally hundreds of Armenian youth who now hold prestigious and key positions in a variety of fields and professions all over the world! The history and outstanding achievements of the university in the last 45 years has amply confirmed the validity of the noble vision of its founding fathers. This Armenian university has blessed the Armenian communities around the world with quality leadership and uplifted the Armenian name in the entire Arab world of the Middle East and beyond!

Members of the Board of Trustees composed of Robert Hekemian, Dr. H. Philip Hovnanian, Robert H. Philibosian, Esq., Dr. Joseph P. Zeronian, Dr. H. Steven Aharonian, Rev. Dr. Carnegie Calian, George Phillips, Esq., Samuel Hekemian, Dr. J. B. M. Kassanjian, Albert Momjian, Esq., Andrew Torigian, Rev. Jirair Sogomian and Joyce Stein, from the United States and Dr. Susan Kassab, Rev. Robert Sarkissian, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, Hrayr Jebejian, Professor Sossi Balian, Nabil Ekmeji, Rev. Dr. John Khanjian, and Rev. Megerdich Karagoezian, from Beirut, Lebanon, chaired by Mr. Herair Mouradian, were treated to two important programs held on the campus of the university.

They enjoyed an exposition of historic Armenian coins displayed in the Barsumian Library, and an outstanding evening program celebrating the 45th anniversary of the Haigazian University Armenological Program. The occasion also marked the publication of the 20th issue of the Armenological Review - a prestigious annual publication that delights the Armenian public with its substantial articles on literary, philosophi-



Haigazian University Board of Trustees (above); President Andrew Torigian cutting the 45th anniversary cake of Haigazian University.

cal and religious topics of utmost importance. In its two-day session, the Board dealt with timely, academic, social and financial issues that affect the mission of the university in the shaping of the future of youth in the Middle East and a number of other coun-

tries represented in the student body. The Armenian public owes a debt of thankfulness to the President of the University, Dr. John Khanjian and his supporting staff for the valuable educational service they render to the Armenian public. □

2001 Near East Mission Partner Visit

by Louis Kurkjian and Herair Mouradian*

In April and May, along with our new Executive Director, Rev. Jirair Sogomian, we visited our mission partners in the Near East. The purpose was to listen to and build on the partnership existing between the AMAA and the Near East Union. Our time was totally consumed in meetings working with the leadership and the pastors. They appreciated our listening to their feelings and our genuine attempt to understand their issues and concerns. Discussions were open and frank and covered all aspects of the AMAA/UAECNE relationship. We returned with recommendations for the AMAA board as it continues the AMAA commitment to strengthen the Union.

During visits to Aleppo and Beirut, we were encouraged and pleased with the dedication of our pastors, their wives and the community working together. It was particularly encouraging that all of the pulpits were filled with young and energetic pastors. The average age of the Near East pastors is 39.4 years. There are yet more Christian workers and potential pastors being educated through AMAA supported schools, Haigazian University and the Near East School of Theology (NEST).

Sixteen churches in Lebanon and Syria are part of the Near East Union and vary substantially in size, opportunities and issues. Focus on youth is evident, but the needs of the elderly are also a priority. At the Nor Amanos (Dora) church, twelve new members, primarily youth, joined the church during our Sunday worship. Youth meetings in individual churches are held weekly and the numbers of participants continues to grow. Some churches have Daily Vacation Bible Schools attracting neighborhood youth to learn about God and participate in the church and in the schools. AMAA support is provided to the churches and the Near East pastors as they serve the evangelical community.

Christian Endeavor programs have always been strong in Near East churches. It was a

joy to see young people lead singing, teaching Sunday school and just being helpful. Their joy is obvious especially when singing from the Nor Yerk hymnal, which features praise music. Summer camps have



A twenty-two year old student at Arevig center playing the Armenian national anthem on a keyboard (above). Discussion on Syrian Schools with (clockwise) Rev. Paul Haidostian, Rev. Harout Selimian, Mr. Samuel Tashjian, Mr. Aram Cholakian, Rev. Youssef O. Jabbour and Louis Kurkjian.

been the foundation of joint youth activities among the churches. AMAA support of summer camp programs this year will facilitate attendance of 60 additional youth at three summer camps in Lebanon. We learned that 85 young people in Syria and Lebanon have been working for two years to save enough money to go to Armenia this summer to participate in the 1700th anniversary youth camping program. The AMAA will partner with these young people in providing partial support for their trip. The Christian Endeavor movement in both countries is very much alive. It was reassuring to see the commitment of these young people in serving their churches and communities.

Armenian Evangelicals in the Near East continue to go through difficult times as the past civil war in Lebanon, current high unemployment and a rising cost of living in both countries are having a major impact. Relief activity in both Lebanon and Syria has taken on a new urgency and increased support from the AMAA and its donors and

other organizations is critical. Our pastors are faced with daily requests for assistance. This includes costs for hospitalization and medical care, assistance for those who have lost a breadwinner and for general benevolence. There is much need everywhere and it must be faced each day. The AMAA, ACO, the Jinishian Fund and the Karagoezian Foundation are key relief partners. We are confident that, with time, conditions within the Armenian Evangelical community will improve but recovery will be a long process. The community will require extensive support from the AMAA and other organizations for a long period of time. Even with these difficulties, the spirit of the people, congregations, youth and pastors is heartwarming and encouraging.

The three Armenian churches, Evangelical, Catholic and Orthodox, support the old-age homes in Beirut and Aleppo where the spirit of cooperation works well. At both facilities there are wings that house special education classrooms where handicapped

*Louis Kurkjian and Herair Mouradian are co-chairs of the AMAA Near East Committee

children are taught. Armenian Evangelicals have been leaders in initiating programs to help the community. A new program in Aleppo is the Arevig Handicapped Day Center, which provides special care and learning to the physically handicapped. Visiting the Arevig Center, the Kurkijians were moved by a twenty-two year old severely handicapped young man who played the Armenian national anthem on a keyboard. His concentration, as he was playing with knurled fingers, was an unforgettable experience. AMAA support is provided to the old age homes and support for the Arevig Center will be proposed in the 2001-2002 budget.

Our visit gave us a better appreciation of the impact of the Evangelical school system in the Near East to the Armenian community worldwide. The AMAA supports primary and secondary schools, Haigazian University and NEST. These educational institutions have been and will be the source of many Armenian Evangelical Christian leaders.

In Syria, the school system is centrally managed. Innovative educational techniques are being implemented. Teaching with computers in kindergarten is an example of advanced educational methods that are being introduced into schools in our Union. Financial pressure has increased due to a required 25 percent increase in teacher salaries without an allowable increase in tuition. Biblelands, a United Kingdom organization, has been a significant mission partner in the Syrian school system, providing funds for both facility and educational improvements. The AMAA is evaluating a number of opportunities to further assist the Syrian school system.

The longest and most intense discussion was held with the Union's Educational Council in a strategic review of the schools in Lebanon. The economy has had a direct affect on the educational system. Parents who cannot afford tuition payments have been moving their children to government schools. Past debts of the school system dating back to the civil conflict are severe problems. The Educational Council has been struggling with the issue of how many schools are needed to serve our community. After much discussion and prayerful review they have firmly concluded that the current structure is in the best interest of the Evan-



Reception of new members on April 29, 2001 at the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church of Nor Amanos (Dora), with Rev. Nerses Balabanian, the pastor of the church at the pulpit (above). Sunday School at Dora Church.

gelical community at this time. With this conviction, the AMAA discussions focused on four areas:

- Approaches to clearing the past debts of the schools
- Viable financial plans for future school operation
- Increasing enrollment at all schools
- Continued implementation of improvements in the schools

Recommendations for AMAA support and for Union operations were discussed. Stabilizing and strengthening the schools will be a step by step endeavor requiring mutual discussion and cooperation between the Union, the AMAA and other Union mission partners. The Union will be embarking on a campaign, cooperatively handled by the pastors and the schools, to increase school enrollment. Mission partners have funded many improvements in the schools.

These improvements have included new and renovated computer and chemistry laboratories and playgrounds. AMAA funds were used to complete much needed face lifting of our school buildings. Further improvements will be required to re-establish our Evangelical schools as the premier church based schools in the region. Biblelands is a primary mission partner of the Evangelical school system; assistance is also received from the Gulbenkian Foundation and other organizations. The AMAA provides support, which includes significant participation from the Stephen Philibosian Foundation.

We feel that our trip was meaningful, appreciated and informative. We are committed to the mission work of the AMAA with our personal emphasis being the Near East. Your continued prayers and support of the AMAA's work in this region is important and vital.□

AMAA Leadership Visits Armenia

AMAA Continues its Focus on Armenia

AMAA President, Mr. Andrew Torigian, and the newly appointed Executive Director, The Rev. Jirair Sogomian, paid a pivotal visit to Armenia from April 30 to May 8, to meet with local leadership and the extensive mission staff in Armenia and to confirm AMAA's continuing support of their imaginative and sacrificial ministry.

While in Yerevan, Mr. Torigian and the Rev. Sogomian, along with the AMAA's Representative in Armenia, Rev. René Léonian, visited with the President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, Prime Minister Antranik Markarian, President of Parliament, Armen Khatchaturian, President of Council of State Religious Affairs, Razmiz Markossian, and His Holiness Karken II, to pay their respects, to update them on AMAA's extensive spiritual, educational and benevolent caring ministries, to thank them for their encouragement and support, and to receive their insights and guidance for future outreach to areas of Armenia which have hitherto not been touched by the gospel of Christ or the living and compassionate outreach of the church.

During their eight-day stay, they also visited fledgling churches and fellowships in Talin, Spitak, Gumri, Stepanavan, Vanatzor and Yerevan, preaching the Word of God, worshipping with the local saints, listening to their needs and concerns, and encouraging them in their challenging tasks in these most trying times in the history of our decade-long independence. They also met, along with Mr. Harout Necessian, AMAA's Director of Christian Education and youth work, with local leaders and volunteers in these fields, inspiring them with encouraging messages of hope, and praying for them for wisdom and courage for the living of these days.

In their busy schedule, they also found



AMAA Executive Director Rev. Jirair Sogomian and President Andy Torigian with the Armenian Evangelical Church members of Stepanavan, Armenia (above). The AMAA staff and volunteers with the AMAA President Andy Torigian and Executive Director Rev. Jirair Sogomian.

time to meet with pastors from Armenia, Georgia and Russia, to listen to their most pressing concerns and to reassure them

of AMAA's continuing commitment to support their vital and nation-building ministries. They also visited the newly-



Executive Director of the AMAA Rev. Jirair Sogomian preaching at the Armenian Evangelical church of Yerevan.

established 1997 Armenian Evangelical Seminary, where Rev. Sogomian spoke to the seminarians in a chapel service and encouraged them not only to pursue their formal theological education in preparation for the ministry of the word, but also to value the importance of their continuing education and spiritual growth and nurturing during the entire span of their life-ministry!

On Sunday morning, Rev. Sogomian, preached to the Armenia Evangelical Congregation in Yerevan, which meets every Sunday in the Architect's Hall for joyful worship. Taking his text from the well-known passage on love from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, he impressed upon them Paul's crucial message that no matter what our particular God-given talents or spiritual gifts, that if we use them without reflecting God's love so wonderfully revealed to us in the Christ, our work and efforts amount to nothing. As Christians, both in the living of our lives, in the practice of our faith, and in all our human relationships, our priority is to be God's loving, caring, and compassionate presence to a world which God loved even to the cross!



At the Armenian Evangelical Seminary of Armenia are the President of the Seminary Rev. René Léonian, the Dean of the Seminary Rev. Guevork Guevorkian, President of the AMAA Andy Torigian, Executive Director of the AMAA Rev. Jirair Sogomian and Rev. Hamlet Gureghian (above); AMAA's Representative in Armenia Rev. René Léonian, AMAA's Executive Director Rev. Jirair Sogomian, President of Armenia Robert Kocharian and AMAA President Andy Torigian at their meeting in the Presidential Office.

When asked about his impressions from his short yet intense visit, among other comments, Rev. Sogomian said that

within the short span of his visits to Lebanon and Armenia, his prayer list more than quadrupled! □

Armenian Evangelicals in Brazil

Despite the economic problems that plague Brazil and many of the other countries of Latin America, the Armenian Evangelical Central Church of Sao Paulo has an active and supportive congregation, and even has a mission program in the outlying town of Ferraz de Vasconcelos.

The church's latest report to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) outlines its activities and discusses some of the problems facing the church. The following are some of the highlights of the report:

"Church services take place Sunday mornings at 10:45 a.m., led by Pastor Dmitri Constandinis, who is assisted by Dr. Roy Abrahamian. Bible study programs for both children and adults are offered Sunday mornings before church services and also during the week.

"The Sunday School Department performs evangelism and social assistance programs for the poor children who live near the church. About 60 such children participate in such programs. Every Sunday they learn Christian songs and Biblical passages and receive a meal. Sometimes they receive school materials, such as color pencils. Occasionally, our church offers breakfast for all the congregation, including these children. We also distribute food, from time to time, to the poor families who live near our church.

"The weekly activities of the Women's Department includes biblical study and social programs. These programs include visits to the sick and elderly and also to an Armenian asylum. The women organize dinners, barbecues and meals for our church community. They also plan fund-raising dinners and bazaars and participate in the programs of other churches.

"Our Music Department organizes musical programs, to which all Armenian churches and organizations are invited. Sometimes professional musicians also participate in these programs.

"The church's mission outreach program in the nearby town of Ferraz de Vasconcelos offers Sunday worship services and prayer



Sunday morning worship service (above); Bible School for the children in the neighborhood.

meetings to a congregation of local Brazilians. About 90-120 people attend these activities. This mission church, established by our Sao Paulo Church, also serves the material needs of these people in the form of food, clothing and blankets. Last year the Sao Paulo Church built two classrooms and two bathrooms for the Sunday School of its outreach church, which serves about 70 children.

"Our church has also helped Armenian and Brazilian evangelical and humanitarian organizations. Last year, we contributed special donations to APEC, an organization that evangelizes among children; for

refugees in Kosovo; and for the homeless in Columbia. We also contributed \$2,000 to the AMAA for the Evangelical Church in Gumri, Armenia."

The Sao Paulo Church was established in 1927 by Armenian immigrants. In view of its remoteness from the Armenian Evangelical communities in the U.S., Europe, Middle East and Armenia, it has done and continues to do a remarkable job in maintaining its Armenian Evangelical identity and acting on its Armenian Evangelical values. And, through its cooperation with and ties to the AMAA, the church keeps in touch with the world-wide Armenian Evangelical family. □

How Armenian Evangelicals Will Celebrate the 1700th Anniversary

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian*

301 - 2001 A.D. — Seventeen Hundredth Anniversary of Armenia's adoption of Christianity as state religion! 1700 years is a notable period in the life of the Armenian Church, especially if we consider the fact that the centuries-long history of Armenian Christendom has been a bitterly fought one — a history of tears, sweat, and blood.

The 1700th Anniversary is an appropriate time to pay tribute to the memory of the pioneers of the Armenian Church who, adopted Christianity as state religion; to salute those who followed in the footsteps of the fourth century fathers of faith, and kept the torch of faith burning; and to renew our dedication to our Christian faith.

Obviously, the seventeen century legacy of Armenian Christendom is a rich one. Its heritage is a proud one, and its benefits to the Armenian nation have been manifold.

While the 1700th anniversary marks a significant milestone in the history of Christianity, Christian Armenians everywhere should be reminded that anniversaries are not only appropriate times to honor the past, but also opportune times to claim the future — to look forward to the future, and with renewed rededication, be challenged to greater efforts. The past is only ours to keep when we are willing to move into a future we will accept.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council has instructed and challenged all Armenian Evangelical churches and organizations to make the year 2001 a year of spiritual revival and renewal, a year of evangelism and Christian outreach. After all, the Christianization of Armenia was a product of evangelism and outreach.

Thus, the Armenian Evangelical churches worldwide have embarked upon a number of activities to mark this important lesson. Each of the five Church Unions — the Armenian Evangelical Union of France, Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Union of Evangelical Churches in Armenia and Armenian

Evangelical Union of Eurasia — have organized various religious, cultural and artistic programs. They have organized spiritual revival meetings to impart the Christian faith, our religious heritage, and the virtues of the “faith of our fathers.”

Armenian Evangelical churches will also place a special emphasis on Christian education through lectures, seminars, conferences, production and dissemination of Christian literature — like Bibles, textbooks, hymnals, brochures, books, etc. The Armenian Evangelical World Council has just released a bilingual book by the Rev. Vahan H. Tootikian entitled *The Benefits and Contributions of the Armenian Evangelical Church to the Armenian Nation*, which is being translated into French and Eastern Armenian. During this anniversary year there will be other publications on the Armenian Christian heritage.

The Armenian Evangelical churches will conduct programs for youth to participate in youth conferences, camps and trips to Armenia. They will also organize cultural events,

such as lectures, concerts, plays, athletic events, artistic programs, art exhibits, etc.

Our churches will also participate in ecumenical and inter-church anniversary programs, such as religious and cultural and musical events in collaborations with Armenian Apostolic and Catholic Churches.

During the current year, the Union of Evangelical Churches in Armenia will play host to an all Armenian Evangelical anniversary celebration in Yerevan, Armenia in mid-August. In conjunction with an all Armenian Evangelical Youth Rally, a 1700th Anniversary pilgrimage to Armenia has been planned from August 9 - 21, 2001, details of which will soon be communicated through the media.

Finally, the 1700th anniversary of Armenia's adoption of Christianity as state religion will be a meaningful milestone to look at retrospectively as well as prospectively: honoring the past and claiming the future. Honoring the past is noble. But one generation cannot operate on the faith of its ancestors, because a vital faith, which accomplishes and sustains, has always to be a personal and contemporary one. In all our celebrations the question is not how to preserve an abstract past, but how to transmit to the present and the future the virtues of Armenian heritage and the “faith of our fathers.” □

Rev. Tootikian's Latest Anniversary Book on Armenian Evangelicalism

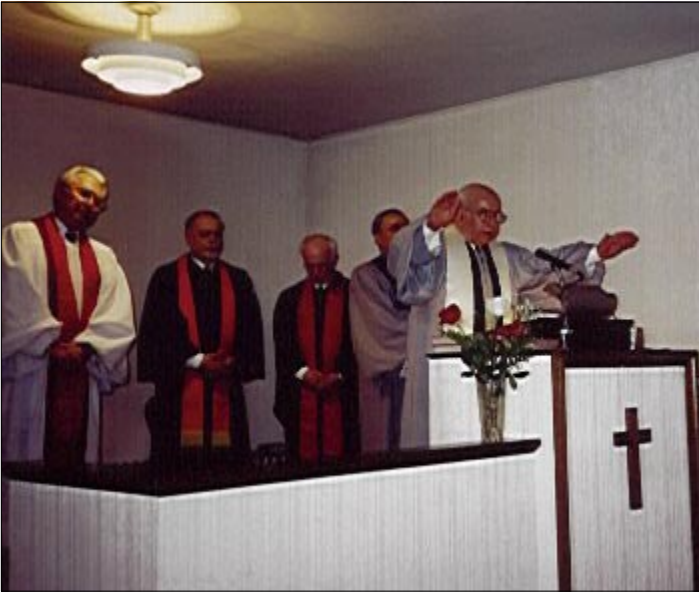
The year 2001 is the 1700th anniversary of the adoption of Christianity as the state religion in Armenia. By happy coincidence it is also the 155th anniversary of the foundation of the Armenian Evangelical Church. Since the Armenian Evangelical Church is part and parcel of Armenian Christendom, this milestone accords an opportunity to present the benefits and contributions of Armenian Evangelicalism to the Armenian nation. The Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian's latest bilingual book, entitled *The Benefits & Contributions of the Armenian Evangelical Church to the Armenian Nation* - aims to do that. The author cites fourteen specific items, which are considered to be benefits and contributions of Armenian Evangelicalism to the Armenian nation. He contends that the Armenian Evangelical Church has worked her way into many corners of the life of the Armenian people. In his words, “Measured by her effects, the Armenian Evangelical Church has proved herself a potent force among the Armenian people. Her record speaks for itself.”

Dr. Tootikian maintains that the Armenian Evangelical Church served the Armenian people in many ways for many decades, administering to their needs, beating their wounds, and lightening their sorrows. Armenian Evangelicalism put no limit to service, nor did it discriminate against other creeds, but served equally all those who bore the name Armenian. It also gave the Armenian nation a potent medium for disclosing its latent intellectual and spiritual force.

We recommend this book to the reading public. The price of the book is \$20.00, plus \$4.00 for mailing and handling. Copies may be received from the AMAA — 31 W. Century Road, Paramus, N. J. 07652.

* Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian is the President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council and the Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America.

Ordination of Rev. Jirair Bizdikian



Rev. Jirair Bizdikian giving the benediction after his ordination, standing (l to r) Rev. Karl Avakian, Rev. Jirair Sogomian, Rev. Barkev Darakjian, and Rev. Vigen Galustian.

The ordination of Rev. Jirair Bizdikian took place on Sunday, March 18, 2001 in the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago. Officiating at the ceremony was Rev. Karl V. Avakian, Minister to the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America

(AEUNA) and participating in the ordination service were Rev. Barkev Darakjian, Pastor Emeritus of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago, Rev. Vigen Galustian, Rev. Aaron Kayayan, Rev. Kevin Kasper and Rev. Jirair Sogomian, Chairman of AEUNA Ministry Committee. Present at this solemn occasion were Rev. Father Zareh Sahakian of the All Saints Armenian Apostolic Church of Glenview, Ill and Deacon Aren Jebejian of the Armenian St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Chicago.

Congratulatory letters were received from many churches and pastors, as well as from Mr. Andy Torigian, president of the AMAA and Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, Moderator of the AEUNA.

Rev. Bizdikian was born in Athens, Greece and has received his theological education at the Near East School of Theology of Beirut, Lebanon and the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Following his studies he has worked as pastoral assistant in churches in Beirut, Lebanon and Montreal, Canada, while carrying a full load and working full time as English language teacher in Canadian educational institutions. He retired from his teaching position in 1995, and since then he has devoted his time to pastoral ministry in the Armenian communities of Canada, United States and Armenia, where he has also been an instructor in New Testament studies at the Armenian Evangelical theological Seminary of Armenia. During the past two and a half years, Rev. Bizdikian has been the visiting pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago.

Rev. Bizdikian is married to Alice Mardirossian and they have four children, Hovig, Sam, Ruth (Cortina) and Dikran. □

Ordination of Rev. Sarkis Pachaian



Ordination of Rev. Sarkis Pachaian, standing (l to r) Rev. Pachaian's wife, Nicole, Rev. Jean Agopian, Rev. Jean Zarifian, Rev. Jean-Louis-Simonet and Rev. Gilbert Leonian.

On Sunday, April 8, 2001, the ordination of Sarkis Pachaian was held during a special service at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Brussels, Belgium. About 150 people were present, among which were the Ambassador of Armenia and his family.

The service of ordination, held under the auspices of the Armenian Evangelical Union of France (AEUF) was presided by Rev. Gilbert Léonian, president of AEUF. Also participating in the service were Rev. Jean Agopian, pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Saint Loup (Marseille) France; Rev. Jean Avedis Zarifian of Montreal, Canada, representing the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA); and Rev. Jean-Louis Simonet, the president of the *Fédération Evangélique Francophone* of Belgium.

Rev. Sarkis Pachaian was born in Yozgat, Turkey. After completing his elementary education, he settled in Istanbul. He served in the church of Istanbul until 1983, after which he came to Belgium. Encouraged by the AMAA, and with its assistance, Rev. Pachaian studied at the Bible College of Brussels and graduated in 1991. Since his graduation he is serving the Armenian Evangelical Church of Brussels as its pastor.

Rev. Pachaian is married to Nicole DerKevorkian and they have two children. □

Camp Arevelk to Host Second Annual Summer Camp Program



East Jewett, NY (Catskill Mountains) was the setting this past summer, August 13 - August 19, 2000 for the first Armenian Evangelical, east coast, Summer Camp Program. Seventeen juniors, ages 10-13, from NY, NJ, MA and Canada, joined together for a week of learning God's Word, and recreational activities in the beautiful Catskill Mountains of New York State. Under the leadership of Rev. Ara and Mrs. Sylvia Jizmejian, the campers participated in daily devotionals and Bible studies, as well as daily outdoor activities, such as hiking, canoeing, swimming, sports, archery, etc. The campers were housed in 2-person Army style tents and also enjoyed evening campfires and sing-alongs led by Rev. Kevin Kasper. Also assisting the camp leaders were six trained counselors from the AEYF (Armenian Evangelical Youth Fellowship).

The week long program was hosted at Camp Tri-Mount, a 535 acre Boy Scout Reservation Camp. Tri-Mount personnel provided all of the meals, trained staff for all recreational activities, and on-site medical staff. By renting the Boy Scout facility, this AEUNA sponsored event was able to put forward an effective, week long program, while incurring minimal expense. A family barbecue was held for all parents and campers on Saturday, August 19, when the parents returned to pickup their children.

The success of the first year's program is evident by the enthusiasm of many parents of the campers, who have pledged their support for holding the camp program again this summer. Now, with the formal name of Camp Arevelk, the second annual east coast Armenian Evangelical Program is scheduled for Sunday, August 12 - Saturday, August 18, 2001. This year's program promises to be even more exciting than last year's program, and again will host the parents & families of campers for a lamb kebab picnic, on Saturday, August 18. Information and applications (July 21 deadline to apply) for this year's program can be obtained by contacting any of the east coast Armenian Evangelical Churches, or by contacting Rev. and Mrs. Jizmejian, at the Armenian Church of the Martyr's in Worcester, MA, at 508-753-7650. You may also contact the Camp Registrar, Dave Shahbazian, at 845-339-3676. As is common to most new programs, funding is limited. Those willing to pledge their financial support can make a tax deductible donation to Camp Arevelk, and are encouraged to contact the Camp Registrar for more information. Your support and prayers for another exciting summer camp program would be greatly appreciated. □

Rev. Robert Swanson bids farewell to Ararat Church

Rev. Robert O. Swanson the Pastor of the Ararat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem, NH, and his wife Lee, bid farewell to the congregation during a special dinner held in their honor at Harris' Pelham Inn on April 8, 2001.

Rev. Swanson, who served the Ararat Church for the past 15 years, will retire after forty-four years of active ministry.

Rev. Swanson is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire (1954) and Crozer Theological Seminary of Philadelphia (1957). He was ordained the same year at Mount Union Congregational Christian Church in Everett, PA.

After pastoring churches in Pennsylvania and New Hampshire for twelve years, Rev. Swanson served in the New Hampshire National Guard and United States Army Reserves as a Chaplain for twenty-six years, retiring in 1982 as lieutenant colonel.

From 1969-1996 Rev. Swanson taught U.S. history and economics at Sanborn Regional High School in Kingston, NH. He has also served churches in southern NH as United Church of Christ interim minister.

Rev. Swanson and his wife were very active at the Greater Armenian Community of Merrimack Valley. They enjoyed working among Armenians, and particularly ministering to the needs of the parish family of Ararat Armenian Congregational Church. □



CAHL Students Celebrate AMAA Month

As the month of March is considered "AMAA Month", the students at the Centers for Armenian Handicapped in Lebanon (CAHL) celebrated this event by a particular way. Being slow learner students, most of the cases have reading and writing difficulties. For this reason, the school organized in all the classes sessions of reading and writing of the name of the Association explaining the four words: "Armenian Missionary Association of America" (AMAA). In the meantime, the teachers explained to the students of their classes, the Christian way of doing charity, like AMAA is doing.

Besides "slow learner" students, the center also offers structured classes for children and young people who are blind and deaf. Associated with the school is the Center's workshop where young people learn carpentry and wicker work. The present director of the center is Mr. Kevork Karaboyadjian.

Each year the AMAA provides significant grants to help the school continue this unique humanitarian work. The students and their parents are grateful for AMAA's aid to this vital mission. □

ԿԱՄԱԻՈՐ ԾԱՌԱՅՈՒԹԵԱՆ ԳԼԽԱԻՈՐ ՊԱՅՄԱՆԸ

Վեր. Եսայի Սարմազեան*

Անշուշտ հոգեւոր կամաւոր ծառայութեան մասին է խօսքը եւ ոչ թէ որեւէ կամաւոր ծառայութեան, որովհետեւ ամէն կամաւոր ծառայութիւն անպայման հոգեւոր կամ քրիստոնէական ծառայութիւն չէ: Բարեսէր, նոյնիսկ անհաւատ մարդեր կրնան սփանչելի կամաւոր ծառայութիւններ ընել՝ այլազան մարզերէ ներս, որոնք խիստ գնահատելի եւ օգտակար ըլլալով հանդերձ, տակաւին կրնան հոգեւոր կամաւոր ծառայութիւն չըլլալ:

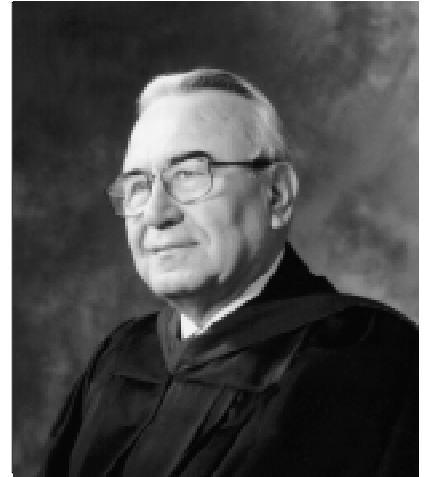
Հոգեւոր կամաւոր ծառայութիւն ընել ուզող անձը - այր եւ կին - որոշ անձ մըն է որ կը փնտռուի ու կը կանչուի Աստուծոյ կողմէ: Սուրբ Գիրքին մէջ Աստուած յաճախ կը փնտռէ որոշ անձեր իր գործը ընելու համար եւ ոչ ուրիշ մարդ - ոչ ալ խումբ մը մարդեր, այլ անհատ մը որ ընդհանրապէս հազուագիւտ է: Նոյնիսկ Աստուած հազարներու մէջ մէկ հատ իրաւ մարդ չէր կրնար գտնել: Ան կ'ըսէ Երեմ մարգարէին. «Նայեցայ եւ ահա մարդ չկար» (Երեմ. 4. 25): «Երուսաղէմի փողոցներուն մէջ պտտեցէք, նայեցէք ու գիտցէք - անոր հրապարակներուն մէջ փնտռեցէք - եթէ մարդ մը կրցաք գտնել, եթէ իրաւունք ընող, ճշմարտութիւն փնտռող մը կայ - Ես այն փառաբան թողութիւն պիտի տամ» (Երեմ. 5. 1): Երբ Սաւուր թագաւորը Աստուծոյ անհնազանդ գտնուեցաւ, Սամուէլ մարգարէն զայն յանդիմանեց եւ ըսաւ իրեն. «Տէրը իրեն համար իր սրտին համեմատ մարդ կը փնտռէ...» (Ա. Թագ. 13. 14): Ինչպէս այն ատեն, Աստուած այսօր ալ - եւ միշտ - իր սրտին համեմատ եւ իրեն համար կամաւոր ծառայող անձեր կը փնտռէ:

Հոգեւոր կամաւոր ծառայութիւն ընել ուզող անձերը մարդերու կողմէ ընտրուած եւ նշանակուած չեն: Ժողովներու կամ համագումարներու մէջ ալ չեն որոշուիր: Ոչ ալ բարձր ուսում կամ մեծ կարողութիւն ունենալը հիմնական պայմաններ են հոգեւոր ծառայութեան: Եկեղեցիին մէջ ժողովական ըլլալը կամ որեւէ պաշտօն ունենալն ալ անպայման հոգեւոր ծառայութիւն չէ: Ասոնք անշուշտ կրնան օգտակար ըլլալ: Բայց նախ ուրիշ պայման մը կայ

որ անխուսափելի եւ անփոխարինելի է: Բոլորէն առաջ կու գայ եւ ամենէն կարեւոր պայմանն է - Աստուծոյ հանդիպիլ: Այլ խօսքով՝ ապաշխարել կամ վերստին ծնունդ ունենալ: Առանց հոգեւոր փորձառութեան, ոչ մէկ անձ - որքան ալ կարող ըլլայ, բարձր ուսում, դիրք եւ պաշտօն ունենայ, եթէ նոյնիսկ ամէն օր ծառայէ եկեղեցիին մէջ, կամ մեծամեծ նուիրատուութիւններ ընէ - Աստուծոյ կողմէ ընդունուած հոգեւոր ծառայութիւն ըրած կրնայ ըլլալ: Աստուած մեր գործերէն, ընծաներէն, ծառայութիւններէն եւ պաշտօններէն առաջ մեր անձը կ'ուզէ - մեր ապաշխարութիւնը: Ասիկա ինչպէ՞ս կ'ըլլայ...

- Անձամբ զԱստուած կամ Յիսուսը տեսած ըլլալով՝ որոշ հոգեւոր փորձառութեամբ մը: Հոգեւոր փորձառութեան - ինչպէս ծառայութեան - ձեւերը կը տարբերին ու կը փոխուին, բայց ոչ իրողութիւնը: Ոչ քրիստոնէական կրօնք կայ, ոչ ալ կեանք, առանց հոգեւոր փորձառութեան: Ասիկա մեր որոշումով չըլլար, այլ Աստուծոյ նախաձեռնութեամբ: Ան մեզ կը կանչէ, կը փոխէ եւ կուտայ մեզի՝ իր փառքին համար հոգեւոր ծառայութիւն մատուցանելու առանձնաշնորհումը:

Մովսէսի ծառայութիւնը Աստուծոյ կողմէ ընդունուեցաւ միայն այն ատեն երբ ան Քորեբ Լեւրան վրայ հոգեւոր փորձառութիւն մը ունեցաւ - Աստուծոյ հանդիպեցաւ: Աստուած խօսեցաւ իրեն - վառող մորենիին մէջէն - եւ հոն անոր կեանքը հիմնապէս փոխուեցաւ եւ միայն անկէ ետք իր մատուցած ծառայութիւնները ընդունելի եղան Աստուծոյ կողմէ: Թէ՛ ինք օրհնուեցաւ եւ թէ՛ Աստուած փառաւորուեցաւ իր անձով եւ հոգեւոր ծառայութիւններով: Դժուարութիւններ եւ յուսահատութիւններ ունեցաւ, բայց տեղի չտուաւ: Հաւատարիմ մնաց Աստուծոյ:



* Վեր. Եսայի Սարմազեան հոլիւն է Թորոնթոյի (Գանատա) Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիին:

Եսայի մարգարեին Աստուծոյ հանդիպելու փորձառութիւնը տարբեր էր, որ տեղի ունեցաւ տեսիլքով մը՝ Երուսաղէմի տաճարին մէջ, որոշ առիթով մը: Ան կը վկայէ իր մասին. «Ոգիաբազաւորին մահուան տարին Տէրը տեսայ, որ բարձր ու վերացած աթոռի վրայ նստած էր» (Եսայի 6. 1): Նաեւ Դանիէլ, Երեմ, Եզեկիէլ, Զաքարիա եւ քաղմաթիւ այլ մարգարէներ եւ կարգ մը անձեր այլազան տեսիլքներով հանդիպած են Աստուծոյ եւ ապա Անկէ պատգամ եւ հոգեւոր ծառայութեան կոչում ու առաքելութիւն ստացած են:

Ամէն մարդու տրուած չէ տեսիլք ունենալ: Ոչ ալ ամէն տեսիլք անպայման հոգեւոր տեսիլք է: Ոմանք խառնակ հոգեվիճակ մը կ'ունենան կամ իրենց տեսնել ուզած բանը կը տեսնեն եւ կ'ըսեն թէ տեսիլք մը ունեցան - Յիսուսը, ճերմակ հանդերձով մէկը, հրեշտակ մը, սուրբ մը կամ Մարիամ կոյսը տեսան, որ իրենց այս կամ այն բանը խօսեցաւ: Ասոնք կրնան ճշմարիտ հոգեւոր տեսիլք ըլլալ եւ չըլլալ: Հոգեւոր տեսիլքէն ետք, մարդ հիմնապէս կը փոխուի, հոգեւոր դարձ եւ բոլորովին նոր կեանք մը կ'ունենայ եւ կ'ապրի Աստուծոյ համար: Անոր նոր կեանքը կը փաստէ իր տեսիլքին հոգեւոր ըլլալը կամ չըլլալը:

Եսայի մարգարեին տեսիլքը ճշմարիտ հոգեւոր տեսիլք մըն էր - ան իրապէս տեսաւ զԱստուած - որովհետեւ, ա) ան ընդունեց իր մեղաւոր եւ անարժան ըլլալը. «Վայ ինծի, ահա կը կոքսուիմ ... պիղծ շրթունք ունեցող մարդ մըն եմ»: Բ) Մեղքերու թողութիւն - փրկութիւն - ունեցաւ. «Քու անօրէնութիւնդ վերցուեցաւ եւ մեղքիդ քաւութիւն եղաւ»: Գ) Աստուծոյ նուիրուած կեանք մը ունեցաւ: Երբ Աստուած հարցուց՝ «Ձեզ ինչ եմ», ան ըսաւ՝ «Ահաւասիկ ես՝ զիս ինչ եմ» (Եսայի 6. 5-8): Հոգեւոր տեսիլք կամ փորձառութիւն ունեցած ըլլալու հիմնական եւ անխուսափելի երեք յաջորդական աստիճաններն ու փաստներն են ասոնք - ընդունիլ մեր մեղաւոր ըլլալը, փրկութեան գիտակցութիւնը ունենալ եւ նուիրուիլ կամաւոր ծառայութեան՝ Աստուծոյ փառքին համար:

Պօղոս Առաքելի կեանքը ուրիշ դասական եւ հեղինակաւոր օրինակ մըն է որ ցոյց կուտայ թէ հոգեւոր փորձառութիւնը գլխաւոր պայմանն է հոգեւոր կամաւոր ծառայութեան (Գործք Առաքելոց 9. 1-9): Անոր ալ փորձառութիւնը տեսիլքով մը տեղի ունեցաւ, Դամասկոսի ճամբուն վրայ, թէեւ տարբեր ձեւով եւ տարբեր պայմաններու տակ: Ան ուղղակի տեսաւ Յիսուսը, լսեց Անոր ձայնը,

վերջապէս ընդունեց իր մեղաւոր եւ սխալ ընթացքի մէջ ըլլալը, ապա բոլորովին նոր կեանք մը ունեցաւ եւ յայտնեց իր կամաւոր ծառայութիւնը Յիսուսի. «Տէր ի՞նչ կ'ուզես որ ընեմ»: Ան հիմա - եւ միայն հիմա - պատրաստ էր կամաւոր ծառայութեան, որովհետեւ ապաշխարած էր՝ վերստին ծնած, նոր կեանք մը ունեցած էր: Հիմնապէս փոխուած էր: Հետագային՝ ան իր խօսքով, նամակներով, վկայութիւններով, գործերով եւ Յիսուսի համար նահատակուելով՝ ցոյց տուաւ թէ հոգեւոր փորձառութիւնը իրականութիւն է, կենսական է, Աստուծոյ է, եւ Աստուծոյ փառքին համար է: Պօղոսի հետ գործ ունեցող բոլոր մարդերն ալ - ոչ միայն իր գործակիցները եւ քրիստոնեաները - այլ նաեւ անհաւատները, հեթանոսները, կախարդները, կառավարիչները, նոյնիսկ թագաւորները զարմանքով նշմարեցին ու հաստատեցին անոր բոլորովին փոխուած եւ նոր անձ մը ըլլալը: Հին ու նոր կեանքի այս յստակ եւ ուշագրաւ տարբերութիւնը մարդեր կը տեսնէին մեր կեանքերուն մէջ...

Մենք կրնանք քրիստոնեայ կրօնին պատկանիլ, քրիստոնեայ ընտանիքի մը մէջ ըլլալ, մկրտուած ըլլալ, երբեմն հաղորդութիւն առնել, եկեղեցիին մէջ մեծնալ, անոր այլազան ժողովներուն մէջ անդամ ըլլալ եւ քաղմաթիւ ծառայութիւններ մատուցանել, նոյնիսկ կրնանք յաճախ աղօթել եւ ամէն կիրակի պաշտամունքներու մասնակցիլ, բայց տակաւին հոգեւոր փորձառութիւն չունենալ: Փրկուած չըլլալ: Հոգեւոր փորձառութեան ձեւերը անձէ անձ կը տարբերին: Ամէն մարդ անպայման տեսիլք կրնայ չունենալ, բայց անպայման կերպով մը տեսած ըլլալու է Յիսուսը եւ փոխուած: Միայն անկէ ետք մեր կամաւոր ծառայութիւնները պիտի ընդունուին Աստուծոյ կողմէ: Այլապէս մեր բոլոր ծառայութիւնները կրնան ըլլալ ի դերեւ, ինքնագոհութիւն եւ ինքնախաբէութիւն: Լաւագոյն պարագային՝ քարեգործութիւն՝ բայց ոչ հոգեւոր ծառայութիւն:

Ինչպէս Քրիստոսի աշխարհ գալէն ետք պատմութիւնը բաժնուեցաւ երկու մասի՝ Քրիստոսէ առաջ (Ք.Ա.) եւ Քրիստոսէ ետք (Ք.Ե.), նոյնպէս ալ իւրաքանչիւր ճշմարիտ քրիստոնեայի կեանքը ունի երկու մաս - Քրիստոսէ առաջ՝ մեղքի մէջ մեռած հիմ կեանք, Քրիստոսէ ետք՝ մեղքէ փրկուած նոր օրհնեալ եւ յաւիտեական կեանք - Աստուծոյ փառքին համար:

Կամաւոր ծառայութեան գլխաւոր պայմանը հոգեւոր փորձառութիւն ունենալն է: □

Alexander Matossian

Alexander Matossian passed away on Sunday, February 25, 2001. Memorial services were held at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ. He is survived by his wife, Hripsime, and children, Cynthia and her husband George of Solebury, PA; son Michael and his wife Karen of Charlotte, NC; and son Berj and his wife Mary Kay of Ukiah, CA; and grandchildren Nora, Michael Shant, Armand, Sarah and Robert Preston.



Alex was the fifth child of Aintabtzi parents Misak and Vahide Matossian. His sisters, Emelia Kutchukian and Ephronia Masbanadjian, and three brothers, Arthur, Puzant and Robert Matossian, had all predeceased him.

In 1953, Alex married Hripsime, nee Tombalakian, in Beirut, Lebanon, and they were blessed with daughter Cynthia and two sons, Michael and Berj.

In Beirut, Alex was a member of the First Armenian Evangelical Church and had served on the church council as treasurer for many years. He was an active member of the Christian Endeavor and had taught in Sunday School. He had written many short stories in Armenian which appeared in the publications of the Christian Endeavor. On numerous occasions Alex was asked to give the message in church, Sunday school and women's guild annual dinner. Once, during a session it was announced, "now the message is going to be brought to you by Alex Matossian." Alex was stunned. No one had told him that he was going to be the speaker for that day. He got up in front of the people, stood there silently for a moment, when a young boy said loudly, "he doesn't know what he is going to say." Alex gave the message that day beginning with "Everyday is Christmas" and emphasized the need to keep the Christmas spirit alive in us every single day. Alex's brother Robert never forgot that and he would often remark – Everyday is Christmas!

In June of 1967, right after the 5-day war, the Alex Matossian family emigrated to the United States and settled in Glen Rock, NJ to provide a more peaceful environment for their three children and also give them an opportunity for good education. He had a jewelry engraving business in Ridgewood, NJ. They were members of the Armenian Presbyterian

Church of Paramus. In 1996 Alex and Hripsime decided to live close to their children and moved to Ukiah, CA where they spent their winters, and returned to Doylestown, PA in mid May to be close to their daughter Cynthia, and went back to Ukiah in the fall via Charlotte, NC after visiting their son Michael and family. Three years later, Alex's health did not allow him to travel so they stayed in Doylestown year round.

Throughout his life two things had been most important to Alex – his church and his family. His faith and trust in God were profound and unwavering. His children spoke about their father at the funeral service. They spoke of a loving father with enormous integrity, one who lived his faith in his daily life. In their testimonials, which were read at the funeral service, Rev. Bernard Guekguezian and Rev. Karl Avakian said respectively the following about Alex. "Alex was a good member in our Christian Endeavor. He was always genuine with the people in his life." "As his pastor for over 11 years, I learned to admire the character of this man, his wise counsel and his friendship, and his humility."

Blessed be his memory. □

Rhoda Ruth Iskikian Habib

(November 29, 1951 – March 28, 2001)

— by Joseph M. Iskikian (Grieving Father)
"...There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." -2 Tim. 4:8

Rhoda Ruth Iskikian Habib graced this world for all too short a time, but the love and warmth she spread to all she touched in all her many roles, as daughter, sister, wife and mother, colleague, and friend, has left us with a keener sense of our humanity, and this shall remain with us always.

Rhoda was born in Beirut, Lebanon on November 29, 1951 to Joseph and Haigouhi Iskikian, and lived there until the age of ten, when her family emigrated to the United States and established themselves in San Francisco. Rhoda continued her education, adding to her elementary schooling begun in Beirut's Armenian Evangelical Central High School, by attending West Portal Elementary School, West Portal Lutheran Junior High, and Lowell High. It was during these formative years that Rhoda's spiritual life started to develop



through her active participation in S.F.'s First Church of the Nazarene, in its music department, and the youth choir.

Rhoda's adult life began during her college years at the University of San Francisco. It was there that she met Edgard Habib who was to become her husband and long-term best friend. Her post-graduate work took her to San Jose State University where she received a Master of Science degree in political science and U.S. Government, summa cum laude, thus acquiring an important understanding of the world at large, and particularly the developing world, which she was later to put to productive use in her professional life. Of particular concern to Rhoda was the plight of underprivileged children everywhere, most notably in the Middle East and Armenia. Her commitment to justice, together with her highly evolved spirituality and her sense of pride in her roots in these regions of the world, led her to a life of strong activity on their behalf.

Armed with these strong academic credentials, Rhoda started her professional life by entering a consulting career in Washington, D.C. after her family moved to Maryland. She was soon to establish a strong reputation for her personal and professional qualities.

Rhoda's fast-growing professional success notwithstanding, it was her family that formed the focus of her life. Since her marriage to Edgard in 1979 and the birth of their daughter Maral in 1989, she was unwavering in her commitment to her family, and that priority was never in doubt. That family also importantly included her parents, Joseph and Haigouhi, her brother John and his wife Kerry, and their two children, and numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins to whom she was deeply devoted.

Not least, Rhoda was a good and loving friend. No one could remain untouched by her charming youthfulness, her luminous personality, and her positive outlook — a trait that she exhibited even in her final days with never a slip. One of her colleagues, perhaps speaking for all of us, wrote: "Rhoda was so capable, smart, competitive, determined, considerate, loyal, devoted, enthusiastic, joyful, proud, caring, and so much more. She was just so wonderful. She was very special to me as a coworker, professional, and friend. I will miss her so much, but that is because I am so much the richer and better because of her presence in my life."

Rhoda is now at peace, and safe in the arms of the Lord. Edgard, Maral, and her devoted parents will miss her dearly, along with her brother John and his family, her relatives and many friends who have been unstinting in their comfort and support. Her parents, Joseph and

Haigouhi, cared for her lovingly during the last ten months of her life, and her extended family and friends never left her side. Rhoda is survived by her only daughter, Maral, her loving husband, Edgard, her dedicated parents, Joseph and Haigouhi, her only brother, John and his family, and numerous relatives.

"Blessed is the memory of the righteous." - Prov. 10:7. □

Տիգրան Զալեան

(Մահուան տարեկիցին առթիւ)

Յունուար 1, 1914-ին, Սիսի մէջ, Լուսաբեր Տօլապեան եւ Հայկազուն Զալեանի յարկին տակ լոյս աշխարհ կուգայ մանչ մը, գոր կը մկրտեն Տիգրան անունով: Տակաւին մանուկ՝ Տիգրան կը կորսնցնէ իր հայրը: Ապա, իր մօր եւ եղբոր հետ 1920-ին կը փոխադրուի Թրիփոլի: Իր նախնական ուսումը կը ստանայ Ամերիկեան վարժարանի մը մէջ ուրկէ շրջանաւարտ կ'ըլլայ 1933-ին, ստանալով իր պատշաճ վկայականը: Իբր ուսումնատեանց եւ յամար ընթերցող, պատանի Տիգրան կը ջանայ խորացնել իր իմաստագրացումը:



1941-ին կ'ամուսնանայ Ժանէթ Քէշիշեանի հետ եւ կը բախտաւորուի չորս զաւակներով՝ Սօսի, Յովսէփ, Սեպուհ եւ Շողիկ: Եղած է հաւատարիմ ամուսին եւ սիրուած հայր մը: Աշխատած է միշտ իր զաւակներուն ապահովութեան եւ յաջողութեան համար տալով անոնց կեանքին լաւագոյնը:

Թրիփոլիին մէջ ունեցած է ընկերային եւ մշակութային խանդավառ եւ բեղուն կեանք մը մասնակցելով գաղութի եկեղեցական եւ ազգային գործունէութեանց: Եղած է ՀՄԸՄ-ի հիմնադիր անդամներէն եւ թծախնդիր շարքային կուսակցական՝ Թրիփոլիի Հայ գաղութին մէջ: Իր եկեղեցական կեանքին մէջ եղած է հաւատացեալ եւ գործունէ անդամ՝ յաճախ ստանալով պատասխանատու պաշտօններ:

1960-ին ընտանիքով կը փոխադրուի Պէյրութ եւ իբր արհեստավարժ աշխատող կը յաջողի հիմնել իր անձնական գործատեղին: Բայց արեւելի քաղաքական անկայունութեան պատճառով, ընտանիքով կը գաղթէ Միացեալ Նահանգներ եւ կը հաստատուի Նիւ Ճըրքի ուր ամբիջապէս կը սկսի աշխատիլ Լիօնէթի հաստատութեան մէջ, մինչեւ

իր հանգստեան կոչուիլը:

Իբր ազգային հարցերով հետաքրքրուող եւ հայրենասէր մէկը, ան Ամերիկայի մէջ ալ յօժարօրէն կը սկսի ծառայել իր եկեղեցիին եւ գաղութին, ուր շնորհիւ իր ազնիւ քննադրութեան կ'ունենայ բազմաթիւ բարեկամներ:

1966-ին կը կորսնցնէ իր կինը՝ Ժանէթը: Կրկին ընտանեկան կեանք մը ունենալու համար կ'ամուսնանայ Էմիլի Արոշեանի հետ, որուն հետ կ'ապրի 18 երջանիկ տարիներ: Իր երկրորդ կնոջը մահէն ետք, հասուն տարիքին եւ իր կեանքի վերջին հանգրուանը ապրելու համար իր սիրելի առաջնեկ աղջկան հետ՝ Նիւ Ճըրքիէն կը փոխադրուի Լոս Անճելէս, ուր ապրեցաւ մերթ խաղաղ, մերթ ալեկոծ սրտով, բայց միշտ շրջապատուած իր հարազատներով: Օր մըն ալ սակայն, Կիրակի օրը, Յունիս 11-ի երեկոյեան, դեռ մուրը չկոխած, իր կեանքին պլպլացող ճրագը անակնալորէն, մարեցաւ՝ խոր սուգի մատնելով իր զաւակները, թոռները եւ իր բոլոր բարեկամները:

Տիգրան Զալեան այս աշխարհէն մեկնեցաւ գիտակից հայու մը, սիրուած հօր մը եւ անկեղծ բարեկամի մը բոլոր պարտականութիւնները լիովին կատարած մէկու մը գոհունակութեամբ: Անկասկած իր յիշատակը անշէջ պիտի մնայ իր զաւակներուն եւ իր բոլոր բարեկամներուն սրտերուն մէջ: □

Տիգրան Ադամեան

—Վեր. Ժիրայր Պողոկեան

Տիգրան Ադամեանի մահով Մոնթրէալի Հայ Աւետարանական Մայր Եկեղեցին կորսնցուց իր հաւատարիմ եւ շատ սիրելի մէկ անդամը:

Տիգրան Ադամեան ծնած էր 1928-ին, Լաթափա, (Սուրիա): Ան հազիւ երեք տարեկան հասակին՝ որք մնացած է եւ իր մեծ եղբոր եւ քրոջ հետ դրկուած է Լիբանանի Սուրբաբայի Շմլան որբանոցը, ուր կեցած է վեց տարի: Ինը տարեկանին՝ իր հօրեղբայրը գայն առած է իր մօտ իր ընտանիքին որպէս մէկ անդամը: Իր նախնական եւ երկրորդական ուսումը ստացած է Պէյրութի մէջ:

Պատանի հասակին՝ Տիգրան կը դիմէ ու կ'ընդունուի Պէյրութի նաւահանգիստին մաքսատան կողմէ ու կ'աշխատի հոն որպէս հաշուակալ՝ 32 երկար տարիներ: Ան կ'ամուսնանայ 13



Հոկտեմբեր 1957-ին, Օրդ. Սիրարփի Միթիլեանի հետ: Անոնց սիրոյ բոյնին մէջ Աստուած կը շնորհէ երկու սիրասուն զաւակներ, աղջիկ մը՝ Նոյեմին, եւ մանչ մը՝ Յարութիւնը:

Լիբանանի քաղաքական կոնֆլիկտին հետեւանով՝ Ադամեան ընտանիքը կը փոխադրուի Գանատայի Մոնթրէալ քաղաք: Հոս եւս Տիգրան կը շարունակէ աշխատիլ որպէս պաշտօնէայ Շէշ ընկերութեան մէջ մինչեւ 1993, երբ հանգստեան կը կոչուի:

Կիրակի Ապրիլ 8-ին, եկեղեցիէն ետք Տիգրան կ'ունենայ սրտի զօրաւոր տագնապ մը: Ան կը փոխադրուի մօտակայ հիւանդանոց մը թմրած ու գրեթէ անկենդան վիճակի մէջ: Հակառակ բժշկներու ջանքին՝ Չորեքշաբթի, Ապրիլ 11-ին Տիգրան կը մտնէ իր յաւիտեանական բունը:

Ահա 72 տարիներու կեանք մը կը վերջանար անձայն եւ անշուշտ կերպով ինչպէս եղած էր Տիգրան ամբողջ իր կեանքին մէջ: Ան իր ետին կը ձգէ իր կինը՝ Սիրարփին, իր երկու զաւակները՝ Նոյեմին եւ Յարութիւնը, թոռներ եւ ծոռեր: Տիգրան եղած է բարի ու նուիրեալ ամուսին մը եւ սիրով լեցուն հոգատար հայր մը եւ նաեւ գուրգուռու մեծ հայր մը: Ան եղած է հաւատարիմ եւ ծառայատէր մէկ անդամ Մոնթրէալի Հայ Աւետարանական Մայր Եկեղեցիին, յարատեւօտն յաճախելով եկեղեցւոյ բոլոր պաշտամունքներուն՝ առանց բացառութեան: Ան նաեւ կը սիրէր այցելութիւններ կատարել եւ այս կերպով վառ պահել իր կապը հարազատներու եւ բարեկամներու հետ: Այս կերպով ան եղած էր շատ սիրելի եւ յաճախ փնտրուած մէկը:

Բարի եւ հանելի քննադրութեան տէր անձ մըն էր Տիգրան, միշտ ազնիւ, խաղաղարար ու դրական կեցուածքով: Անոր դէմքին վրայէն չէր պակսէր ժպիտը: Ան հեզ ու խոնարհ էր, միշտ համեստ եւ թեթեւ մը ամէկտու: Ան իր անձը ցցող չէր, ուրիշներուն ուշադրութիւնը իր վրայ պահանջող չէր, ոչ ալ իր տեսակետին վրայ պնդող մէկը, հակառակ իր ունեցած հաստատ համոզումներուն: Իրենը չէր փնտրէր, կը նախընտրէր օգնել քան թէ օգնութիւն ստանալ: Ան լաւ հետեւող մըն էր, իշու եւ հնազանդ, արեւի պատրաստ մտիկ ընելու քան թէ խօսելու: Այլ խօսքով՝ Տիգրան բարի վկայուած եւ ամենուն կողմէ ընդունուած, շատ սիրելի քրիստոնէայ մարդ մըն էր: Ան իր ետին կը ձգէ լուսաւոր հետք մը բարի վկայութեանց եւ Աստուծոյ շնորհքին եւ սիրոյն քաղցրութեան: Մենք բոլորս պիտի յիշենք զինք այս կերպով:

«Ապրիս բարի ու հաւատարիմ ծառայ... Մտիք բու Տէրոջդ ուրախութեանը մէջ»: □

SUMMER CAMPS IN ARMENIA AND KARABAGH

Middle of June till the end of August will be a busy period for children and youth in Armenia as AMAA will hold camps in three regions of Armenia and Karabagh, North (Lori camp), Central Armenia (Tsaghkadzor camp) and South (Stepanakert camp). Thousands of children and youth are expected to attend these camps, which are planned and organized in such a way as to give the participants healthy and active rest as well as spiritual nourishment. Interesting programs have been put together to make every day of the camp exciting, encouraging and fruitful. The programs involve quiet times, spiritual lessons equipped with creative activities, such as dramas, games, arts & crafts work to do with the topic under discussion, songs, etc. Alongside these spiritual activities sports, games and nutritious meals will make the rest complete and enjoyable.



Besides these camps over 60 day camps and Vacation Bible Schools have been planned in 65 locations in

Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia. Over 100 children are expected per camp. Thus, near 10,000 (ten thousand) children will participate in the AMAA Summer Camp programs this year.

This year, a 14-day camp has been planned for 100 handicapped children. This camp will be carried out at the request of and in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs.

It costs about \$40 per child to operate a summer camp, and about \$25 per child for a day camp. To meet these costs, the AMAA depends on its members, friends, affiliated churches and concerned Christians. We hope you feel as we do about the importance of these summer camps in the lives of Armenian children. We appeal to you to "sponsor" as many of these children as you are able. Based on our past experience your generosity will have a positive impact on young lives.

Yes, I would like to "sponsor" children to attend summer camps in Armenia.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ for

_____ Children @ \$40 each for day/night camps.

_____ Children @ \$25 each for day camps.

Name _____

Address _____

(Make tax deductible donations to AMAA earmarked for Armenia summer camps, and mail to 31 W. Century Rd., Paramus, NJ 07652.)

Armenian Missionary Association of America

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